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labor, he "gave to the world the first American translation of the Septuagint into English." Several examples are given from Thomson's translation in parallel columns with the texts of the authorized and revised versions, showing that in some instances he anticipated the rendition of the revised version.

Copious extracts from the published letters and writings of Thomson, as well as from a few letters not hitherto published, add to the value of the work. We are inclined to think, however, that the author has indulged in an excessive use of quotations from secondary works. A general bibliography, as well as a special one of Thomson's manuscripts and published works, is appended. The volume presents a neat appearance, and is illustrated with a portrait of Thomson and a view of his residence.

It must be owned that the author essayed a difficult task in preparing a life of Thomson, and, while we cannot regard the volume as making any important contribution to the record of his political career, it presents in readable and convenient form the chief facts of his life, together with numerous extracts from his correspondence and writings, as well as the estimate of scholars upon the various phases of his activities.

HERMAN V. AMES.

*Life and Times of William Lowndes of South Carolina. 1782-1822.*

By MRS. ST. JULIEN RAVENEL. (Boston and New York : Houghton, Mifflin and Co. 1901. Pp. viii, 258.)

A SINGLE golden sentence has kept fragrant the memory of William Lowndes through nearly a century of our history—"The Presidency is not an office to be either solicited or declined"—but it has not availed to keep in memory the facts of his career on which his recognition as a figure worthy of study and preservation must rest. A series of untoward accidents has prevented for nearly three generations the publication of the record of his life, accidents, too, which have resulted in the destruction of the materials for anything but a very meager memorial. His letters and papers, understood to have been very abundant and complete, were intrusted in 1860 to a very competent writer, who duly wrote out a full biography. The death of this gentleman during the war left the manuscript in the hands of a relative of Mr. Lowndes, who also died before he had secured its publication, and with him disappeared, strangely but finally, the entire manuscript biography. Meantime the great fire of 1861 in Charleston had destroyed the whole mass of materials from which this biography had been written. A small collection of private letters and note-books was all that remained ; and now, after nearly forty years of further delay, the reverential and careful hand of a granddaughter has given us the present small volume. We must welcome it as the best and most we are ever to know of a highly interesting character, of one who to his associates and contemporaries in public life seemed truly great and wise, and of one who even in the dimness of the twilight which has so long settled over his memory has still stood as an ideal of noble, unselfish public service. The present biographer has skilfully used her scanty ma-

terials, and her work is marked by a spirit of candor and conscientious care.

William Lowndes, son of Rawlins Lowndes of Revolutionary fame in South Carolina, was born in St. Bartholomew's parish, Colleton, near Charleston, in 1782. At seven years of age he was taken by his mother to London. Here occurred an event which deeply affected all his after-life. Becoming weary while playing a game of ball, he fell asleep outdoors. Rheumatic fever resulted, which he barely survived. As a consequence ill-health followed him through life and ended his days thirty-two years later. Returning to Charleston in 1792, he there received the classical training common in those days, but owing to ill-health he did not go to college. He read law in Charleston, and there in 1802, at the age of twenty, not being admitted to the bar till 1804, he was married to a daughter of General Thomas Pinckney. After some service in the state legislature he took his seat as a member of Congress in 1811. Departing from the Federal family tradition he had become a Republican under Jefferson's administration. At the same time with Lowndes two other remarkable men entered Congress from South Carolina—John C. Calhoun and Langdon Cheves, Calhoun being of the same age with Lowndes. All three held similar political or party views at that time and all promoted zealously the declaration of war with England in 1812. Lowndes's leading interest during the war was the navy, though he gave vigorous support to all the war measures of Madison's administration. He took a leading place, also, in discussions of the United States bank and the tariff. The reports of his speeches are singularly meager, but the testimony to his character and influence and to the impression made by him on all who knew him is abundant. Probably Mr. Clay well expressed it in saying that while it was difficult to say who was greatest, "I think the wisest man I ever knew was William Lowndes." Mr. Lowndes was put before the country for the nomination for President in 1821 by the legislature of South Carolina, and this was the occasion of the sentiment which we have quoted and which has an imperishable beauty. He died and was buried at sea on the passage to England in 1822, when only forty years of age.

To have rescued from further obscurity a character so strong and so refined, and to have given us what memorials have been still spared of so beautiful, and withal pathetic, a career, entitles the author of this volume to the lasting gratitude of all who love high ideals of public life.

D. H. CHAMBERLAIN.

*Correspondence of John C. Calhoun.* Edited by J. FRANKLIN JAMESON, being the Fourth Annual Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission of the American Historical Association, published in the Report of the Association for 1899. Vol. II. (Washington: Government Printing Office. 1900. Pp. 1218.)

THIS volume can confidently be pronounced the most important contribution of original material on our political history in recent years. It